

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 02831 292059Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7106

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

US ERDA GERMANTOWN

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

UNCLAS OTTAWA 2831

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, CA, FR

SUBJECT: ENERGY: PROPOSED FEDERAL FEASIBILITY STUDY OF ENRICHED
URANIUM PLANT AT JAMES BAY

REF: OTTAWA 2242

ALSO FOR NRC

1. DURING COMMONS QUESTION PERIOD ON JULY 25, OPPOSITION
MP FLORA MACDONALD (P.C.) PUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTION TO ENERGY
MINISTER MACDONALD: "NOW THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS
DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH ITS OWN FEASIBILITY STUDY OF AN
ENRICHED URANIUM PLANT IN THE JAMES BAY AREA, WILL THE MINISTER
TELL THE HOUSE WHAT ASPECTS WILL BE LOOKED INTO BY THE FEDERAL
STUDY THAT HE FEELS WERE NOT DEALT WITH BY THE CANADIF REPORT
TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCESS?"

2. MINISTER MACDONALD REPLIED: "THE CONVERSATIONS ARE NOT
COMPLETED WITH THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC WITH RESPECT TO A MUTUAL
STUDY OF THIS QUESTION. THE IMPORTANT CONCERNS THAT WE FEEL
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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 02831 292059Z

SHOULD BE STUDIED ARE FIRSTLY WITH REGARD TO THE SUITABILITY

OF THE DIFFUSION PROCESS FOR THE PURPOSE OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT.
AS THE TIME FOR THE CENTRIFUGAL PROCESS COMES WITH, OF COURSE, MUCH
LOWER COST, DOES DIFFUSION STILL REPRESENT THE BEST METHOD
OF ACHIEVING THIS? WHAT WOULD BE THE IMPACT OF THIS
PARTICULAR DEVELOPMENT IF IT WERE TO GO AHEAD ON THE AVAILABILITY
OF ENERGY, NOT JUST IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC BUT WITHIN AN
EASTERN GRID, WHICH IS ONE OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS
GOVERNMENT? WHAT WOULD BE THE IMPACT OF THIS KIND OF
INVESTMENT ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND OF REAL RESOURCES,
SUCH AS EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER, COMPARED TO THE OTHER
DEMANDS THAT WILL OCCUR THROUGHOUT CANADA TO MEET ENERGY NEEDS AND,
ABOVE ALL, WHAT WILL BE THE AVAILABILITY OF FOREIGN AS OPPOSED
TO CANADIAN URANIUM TO BE SERVICED BY SUCH A PLANT SO THAT THERE
WILL NOT BE IN THE FUTURE ANY INSISTENCE ON A HIGHER LEVEL OF
CANADIAN EXPORTS OF ENRICHED URANIUM TAKE PLACE THAN WE REGARD
AS WITHIN THE NATIONAL INTEREST FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE
RESERVE FORMULA."
JOHNSON

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